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NEWS RELEASE

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Arizona Hunters Should Watch For West Nile Virus

Arizona dove hunters should be watching out for more than just wild birds this season.

They should be on the lookout for mosquitoes carrying West Nile Virus, according to the Arizona Department of Health Services and the Maricopa County Department of Public Health.

“Many hunters will be out before or at dawn when mosquitoes are biting,” said Craig Levy, program manager for Vector-Borne and Zoonotic Diseases for the Arizona Department of Health Services. “It’s important to take just a few precautions to protect yourself against West Nile virus.”

Hunters can protect themselves by:

- Using mosquito repellent containing DEET.
- Wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Wearing rubber gloves while cleaning and handling birds and meat.
- Thoroughly cooking meat.

“Remember you can become the hunted,” said Dr. Jonathan Weisbuch, director of the Maricopa County Department of Public Health. “Protect yourself by wearing a DEET product while hunting.”

Some hunters have also expressed concern about their dogs contracting West Nile virus, but according to Dr. Elisabeth Lawaczeck, Public Health Veterinarian for the Arizona Department of Health Services, “Dogs are extremely unlikely to become sick from West Nile virus.”

For more information, go to www.westnileaz.com, www.maricopa.gov/wnv, or call toll-free at 1-800-314-9243, (Metro Phoenix: 602-364-4500).

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